

Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna

Excellence meets excellence



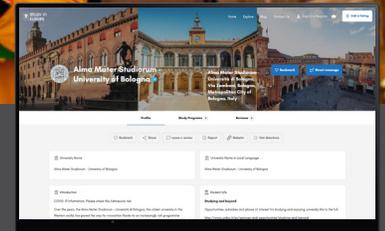
Partnering with Panopto is the inevitable result of an existing project to implement e-learning systems at the University. This project had begun prior to the COVID-19 emergency but developed much quicker than planned, as the need to provide outstanding educational content remotely became immediate.

Enrico Lodolo, ICT Director of the University of Bologna, explains that, "from February to April 2020, the University experienced an initial stage of mass online teaching. At this time, we were operating in a state of emergency, focused on providing essential educational services through the learning management system, Moodle, we had already been using. However, we'd already been working on a teaching project which combined synchronous and asynchronous content through a virtual learning system; therefore, in May 2020, we decided that the time had come to equip ourselves with a Video Content Management System (VMCS). The plan was to integrate it with Moodle, in order to record lessons and provide high-quality live streaming. To aid our decision-making process, we interfaced with other universities that had successfully undergone this change and so we could best understand which system would meet our needs. After conducting our market research, we opted for Panopto."

Excellent integration with existing platforms, usability, and continuous assistance

The ICT Team at the University of Bologna chose Panopto for several reasons. Lodolo says, "The platform natively guaranteed integration with Moodle, creating a singular e-learning environment, an education ecosystem which did not require additional plug-ins. This was critical for our teachers and students. Furthermore, Panopto's admin interface is extremely intuitive and configurable via a single dashboard.

The capture of content takes place via client software, which can be installed on any desktop or mobile device, synchronizing recordings within Moodle, allowing the user to choose which courses, webcams, presentations and screens to record.



About Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna

The Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna, established in the 11th century, is one of the most innovative and forward-thinking universities in Europe. Ranked first among Italian universities by the World University Ranking of Times Higher Education (THE), the multi-disciplinary university offers its 87,590 students a choice of 232 degrees, as well as 84 international degrees. Thanks to its exceptional pedagogy, the quality of its research, its international openness, and its information services, the Alma Mater practises and preaches innovation, mirroring the most prestigious European and US universities.

The recorded video can also be amended thanks to the editing function. It is possible to enhance the video with a wide range of features, including quizzing, captioning and links to external videos. For the University, Panopto represented a great choice in terms of usability and capacity, in addition to guaranteeing a truly exceptional customer care service."

In order to comply with the guidelines set by the three year IT plan of Public Administrations, the University of Bologna took into consideration the cloud version of the Panopto platform, using the Marketplace Agid (Agency for Digital Italy) as an assessment framework.

A permanent learning system

Once the software was integrated into the Virtual Learning System of the University, the next step was for the teaching staff to learn how to use Panopto's tools and operating features. "We organized training in multiple phases which took place over a total period of 2 months," says Rebecca Micheletti, Manager of CeSIA, The Technologies Department for Teaching Innovation at the University of Bologna.

"We started with a cycle of online meetings; in these sessions, we explained the basic features of the Panopto platform and every teacher had the chance to ask questions and understand the system. Then we created a 'Digital Learning' section on the University website (<https://elearning-pro.unibo.it/>), where we uploaded all the materials and information on how to use the platform in the form of slides, videos, and mini-tutorials on more specific features. We subsequently organised another two cycles of online meetings focused on more advanced features of the platform. Each teacher received 6 hours of training via meetings and additional asynchronous training was completed autonomously using the material provided online. The University also set up a support service to answer the teachers' questions and created mini tailor-made tutorials for frequently asked questions.

All feedback from the teaching staff was positive. In terms of the basic features of the platform, it was described as very intuitive and user-friendly. There are still a limited number of professors who, for different reasons, do not want to record their lessons; however, we are certain that we'll achieve 100% usage of the system on behalf of the teaching staff soon."

The University in Numbers

5,778 

members of teaching staff, ranging from tenured professors to contract lecturers

805

rooms equipped for mixed pedagogy

4,452

online learning opportunities available



since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, over **166,000 exams** and over **10,850 degrees** have taken place online

80,000 

students used the Panopto platform in AY 2020/2021

“ All feedback from the teaching staff was positive. In terms of the basic features of the platform, it was described as very intuitive and user-friendly. ”

— **Rebecca Micheletti**, *Manager of CeSIA, The Technologies Department for Teaching Innovation at the University of Bologna*

Four levels of video production

The implementation model of the Virtual Learning System identified by the University of Bologna foresees **four levels of future development**:

1. The platform by teachers in **self-service** mode for the creation of basic content and recording of lessons for educational purposes.
2. Establishing the use of purpose-built **recording rooms** at the University, where intermediate-quality videos pertaining to different subjects will be recorded.
3. Producing high-quality videos using **professional filming services** to create an exceptional video library of training content.
4. **MOOC's** (Massive open online courses), offered by the University in order to engage in more innovative and global pedagogy.

Panopto is uniquely involved in the 2nd and 3rd development levels thanks to its ability to enable the recording and archiving of high-quality video content that also guarantees excellent data protection.

Blended pedagogy with an eye towards Europe

The adoption of a VCMS by leading international academic institutions such as Oxford, Yale, Harvard, and Cambridge was not accidental. For the past few decades, the University of Bologna has increased its international reach, enrolling over 2,500 students from all over the world and another 1,700 from European countries thanks to the Erasmus program. This makes Bologna the third biggest European university in terms of the number of foreign students it hosts.

Lodolo explains that “in an ever-changing environment such as the one we live in, having a high-quality cloud video management platform allows all students – including international students – to continue their exceptional learning experience in their home country. This complies with a new aspiration from the European Erasmus program that aims to continue the possibility of enjoying a blended educational experience, a combination of distance and in-class learning, long after the health emergency is over. An objective of the EU is to involve more students in the Erasmus programs and to reach 50%, eventually increasing to 80%, international student mobility. With Panopto, we can guarantee content, recordings and high-level training videos to students who choose the University of Bologna for their international learning experience.”

“The ease of interaction that students are experiencing while learning from home is an interesting aspect we are observing thanks to Panopto. Some teachers have started to ask students to present their projects in video format. The students – who are digital natives – have started to produce elaborate videos and recordings which they would not have been able to make without a tool such as Panopto. In this sense, we can say that the very presence of such a platform leads to the creation of new ideas, content and pedagogical methodologies both for teaching and learning.”

— **Enrico Lodolo**, ICT Director of the University of Bologna